

Message Text

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70

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 CIEP-01

COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-03 USIA-06 SAM-01 OES-03

SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 FRB-03 FEA-01 SIL-01 LAB-04

PA-01 PRS-01 IO-10 /109 W

----- 126093

R 301920Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7841

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PORT OF SPAIN 1318

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, ENRG, TD

SUBJ: STATUS OF TEXACO-OWTU NEGOTIATIONS

CARACAS ALSO FOR DAO

REF: POS 959

1. ALTHOUGH THE OILFIELD WORKERS TRADE UNION (OWTU) STRIKE AGAINST TEXACO ENDED A MONTH AGO, PROGRESS ON SETTLING THE UNRESOLVED CONTRACT PROVISIONS INCLUDING THE AMOUNT OF THE WAGE INCREASE HAS BEEN MINIMAL. NEGOTIATIONS ON THE CONTRACT, PRIVATELY AND IN THE PRESENCE OF A CONCILIATOR APPOINTED BY THE INDUSTRIAL COURT, HAVE TAKEN PLACE SPORADICALLY BUT HAVE NOT YET NARROWED THE GAP BETWEEN THE UNION'S LATEST DEMAND OF 82 PERCENT AND THE COMPANY'S OFFER OF 40 PERCENT. BOTH SIDES ARE NOW TO SUBMIT THE UNRESOLVED ISSUES ALONG WITH
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THEIR ARGUMENTS AND SUPPORTING EVIDENCE TO THE INDUSTRIAL

COURT ON JUNE 9 AND THEN REPORT TO THE COURT ON JUNE 20 FOR "FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS," PRESUMABLY TO BEGIN HEARINGS.

2. IN THE MEANTIME, WORK AT THE TEXACO REFINERY AND PRODUCTION FIELDS IS RESUMING NEAR NORMAL LEVELS ALTHOUGH A CENTRAL PART OF THE REFINERY'S OPERATION, THE CATALYTIC CRACKING UNIT, IS STILL OUT OF COMMISSION DUE TO MECHANICAL PROBLEMS. AS A GESTURE OF GOODWILL TO ITS STAFF EMPLOYEES, MOST OF WHOM SUPPORTED THE OWTU STRIKE ALTHOUGH THEY ARE NOT YET REPRESENTED BY THE UNION NOR COVERED BY THE UNION'S CONTRACT, TEXACO PAID A BONUS AMOUNTING TO SIX PERCENT OF EACH EMPLOYEE'S 1974 SALARY. THE COMPANY HAD PREVIOUSLY AGREED TO MAKE A SIMILAR BONUS PAYMENT TO ITS WEEKLY AND HOURLY PAID WORKERS.

3. SO FAR THERE HAS BEEN NO DISCERNABLE ACTIVITY BY THE GOVERNMENT TO PURSUE ITS DECISION TO TAKE OVER THE TEXACO MARKETING OPERATIONS. THE GOVERNMENT HAS, HOWEVER, RETAINED CONTROL OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF ALL GASOLINE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AND HAS KEPT DEFENSE FORCE PERSONNEL BEHIND THE WHEELS OF THE TANK WAGONS OF ALL THREE OIL COMPANIES DESPITE PROTESTS BY THE OWTU AND TEXACO.

4. COMMENT: THE FAILURE OF THE STRIKE TO ACHIEVE ANY REAL RESULTS, WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF TEXACO'S ACCEPTANCE OF THE OWTU AS THE BARGAINING AGENT FOR THE MONTHLY-PAID STAFF, HAS EMBOLDENED THE MORE CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS IN THE UNION TO INCREASE THEIR PRESSURE ON PRESIDENT GENERAL GEORGE WEEKES TO CONFINE HIS AND THE UNION'S ACTIVITIES TO INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS RATHER THAN POLITICS. CAUGHT IN A BIND BETWEEN THE UNREALISTIC HOPES HE HAS ENCOURAGED IN

HIS MEMBERS AND THE REALITIES OF THE SITUATION, WEEKES WOULD PREFER, IN LIEU OF A VERY SIZABLE SETTLEMENT WHICH HE IS NOW UNLIKELY TO GET, TO HAVE THE MATTER SETTLED BY THE INDUSTRIAL COURT. HEARINGS BEFORE THE COURT WOULD GIVE HIM A PUBLIC FORUM TO AIR CHARGES OF EXCESSIVE PROFITS AND EXPLOITATION BY TEXACO AND OF THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF MULTI-

NATIONAL CORPORATIONS IN TRINIDAD. A COURT-ORDERED SETTLEMENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WOULD ALSO RELIEVE HIM OF SOME OF THE ONUS OF ACCEPTING A SETTLEMENT BELOW HIS INITIAL DEMAND OF 80 PERCENT AND HIS LATER FIGURE OF 147 PERCENT.
RICH

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